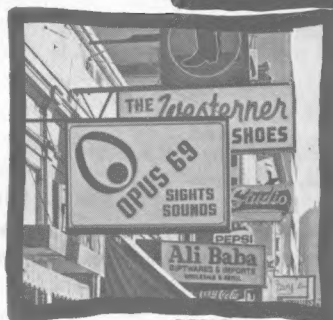


october 1974

the university of alberta magazine

new trail

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In this issue, Peter Bartl of the Department of Art and Design wincines at the low priority society gives to sensory development and things visual . . . and Garry Smith, an Assistant Coach of the Golden Bears football team, takes a swing at the great North American sacred cow. (Sacred cow or not, football is great entertainment and so are the other sports included in the Golden Bear season pass. The coupon at the bottom of this page represents a real bargain—don't miss it.)

new trail

Volume 30, Number 2
October, 1974
The University of Alberta
Edmonton, Canada

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Second Class Mail—Registration Number 3244

This is Entertainment!

With one of the largest and most sophisticated physical education complexes in North America, The University of Alberta can be expected to have produced more than its share of skilled athletic competitors. And, indeed, it has done just that. In the process, the University's athletic representatives have provided top level entertainment to thousands of spectators. In recent years, more and more of them have been attending sports events regularly through their purchase of Golden Bear Season Passes, passes which admit them to a host of scheduled competitions, ranging from football to hockey to basketball to gymnastics.

"The passes are an effective, inexpensive way of bringing good entertainment to the general public," says Chuck Moser, Assistant Director of Athletics for the University. "The public—alumni and others—can share with the student in watching the many sports events here at the University." The passes really are inexpensive—\$15 per year; and the 1974-75 program includes four football games, 15 basketball games, 15 hockey games, plus gymnastics, judo, and other competitions. As well, the pass includes free parking during the event. Given the quality of the competitions and the number of events offered, the Golden Bear Season Pass is undeniably attractive.

The passes are transferable and, notes Mr. Moser, can be used as gifts or donations. Apparently a number of potential fans who live outside the metropolitan Edmonton region or who otherwise cannot attend the games and competitions purchase passes anyway. They then specify an institution or organization—such as the Alberta School for the Deaf—to which the pass should be sent. Or they ask the University to make the selection—"wherever it would do the most good," explains Mr. Moser.

The Golden Bear Season Pass is available immediately. If you would like one, simply fill out the form below, clip and send it, along with a cheque or money order for \$15, to the address shown. Even with the home football season over, dozens of events are upcoming, all of them solidly entertaining.

To: Division of Athletics, Faculty of Physical Education
The University of Alberta, Edmonton T6G 2E1

Please send me _____ Golden Bear Season Pass(es) at \$15 each.
I have enclosed my cheque or money order in the amount of
\$ _____

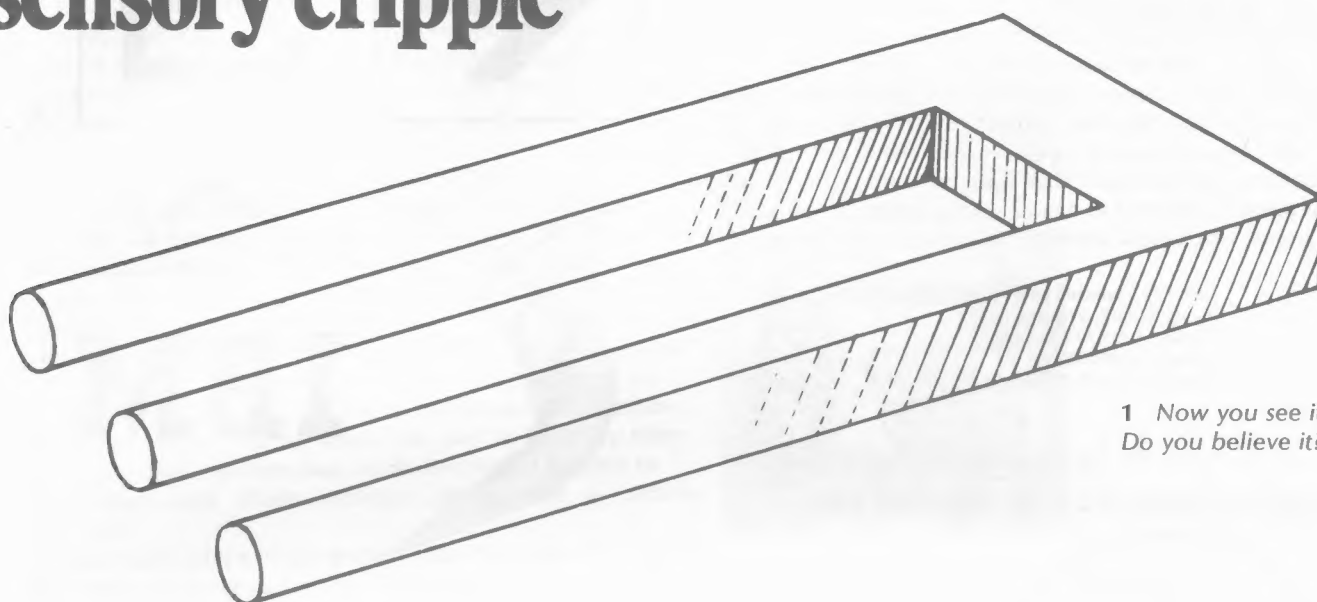
Name _____
Street _____
Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ Province _____ Code _____

☐ I do not live in the Edmonton area but wish to support the
Golden Bears. Please send my Season Pass to the following
institution, or to the institution of your choice.

Name of institution: _____

The age of the symbol manipulating sensory cripple



1 Now you see it!
Do you believe it?

By Peter Bartl, Assistant Professor of Art and Design

We live at a time which might best be called "the age of the symbol manipulating sensory cripple." Our technology enables us to produce wood that looks like plastic, plastic that looks like metal and feels like stone, soybeans that taste like steaks, and machines that sense, see, and hear much better than we do.

Perhaps, as a reference point for our sensory judgment, nature by itself is no longer adequate. Therefore it seems necessary that we develop some kind of training in sensory discrimination.

Experiments have shown that even a short period of sensory deprivation can turn a human being temporarily into a hallucinating idiot, but we can only guess how too much, too little, or the wrong kind of sensory input affects the way we see ourselves and the world.

However, in this brief space, let us concentrate on our most important sense: vision. We know from personal experience that we trust our eyes more than any other sense.

- 1 We say, "I'll believe it when I see it." Our visual experience
- 2 is basically divided into two parts: the forms which our eyes
- 3 see, and the meaning which our brain gives to these forms. The two are by no means always identical.

Content versus form is a controversy among artists that is as old as art itself. But society in general recognizes only content as intelligent expression and form as incidental.

We are vaguely interested in form when we learn to read and write in our early school years. But after that, when it comes to formal discrimination, it is assumed that aesthetic judgment is inborn, or that it develops by itself. Our society



2 There are only four dots on the paper, but we also see a square.



3 Many different forms, but they all have the same meaning.

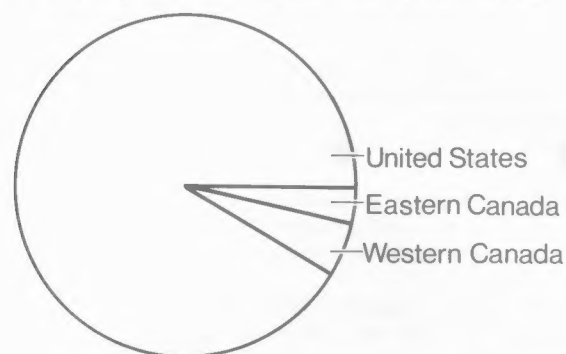
stresses the development of verbal and literate proficiency. Children spend hours and hours in school reading Shakespeare and Milton, or Molière, or Goëthe, depending on their mother tongue. But how many school children visit an art gallery more than once or twice? The public schools admit that any kind of activity which would further the development of visual discrimination is considered recreation, fitted in between more important things. Together with physical education and crafts such activities account for less than ten percent of total class time.

We spend hours writing essays and solving arithmetic problems, but we know that alphanumeric terms alone are not always sufficient to explain every possible concept. For example, who would want to read statistics in this form:

Federally inspected beef
slaughter 1972. Western
Canada 1,751,701. Eastern
Canada 1,126,890.
United States 32,251,000

But in this form, the figures make much more sense:

Federally inspected beef slaughter 1972

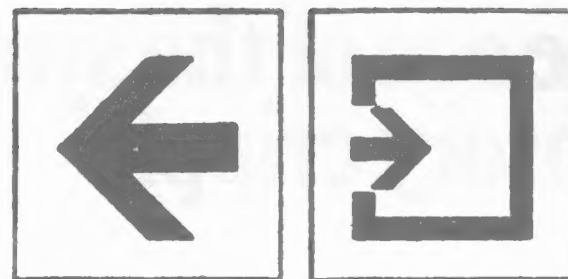


This other mode of communication, which gives immediate meaning to a jumbled set of figures, is called *graphicacy*. It is rapidly becoming a very important tool of communication. It includes traffic signs, symbols for events or institutions and companies, charts, graphs, plans, and other task-oriented symbols, as well as pictures and moving images.

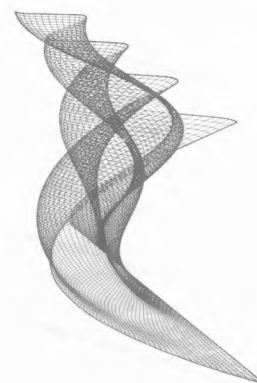
The main characteristic of these means of communication is that they depend on a precise form in order to be clearly understood. They have their own grammar and syntax, based on visual perception and psychology, and, like reading and writing, they have to be learned.

But who teaches us to read and write them? The teacher who asks his students for a pictorial essay rather than a written one, or a graphic presentation of an abstract concept, is indeed rare, and gets peculiar looks from his superiors for his efforts.

The problem, however, goes further than that. The material used in schools shows a complete lack of any kind of visual consideration. Who knows how many learning difficulties are created through simple frustration in children who are not able to perceive these crude, low definition images, or who are distracted by the redundant and perceptually wrong details?



4



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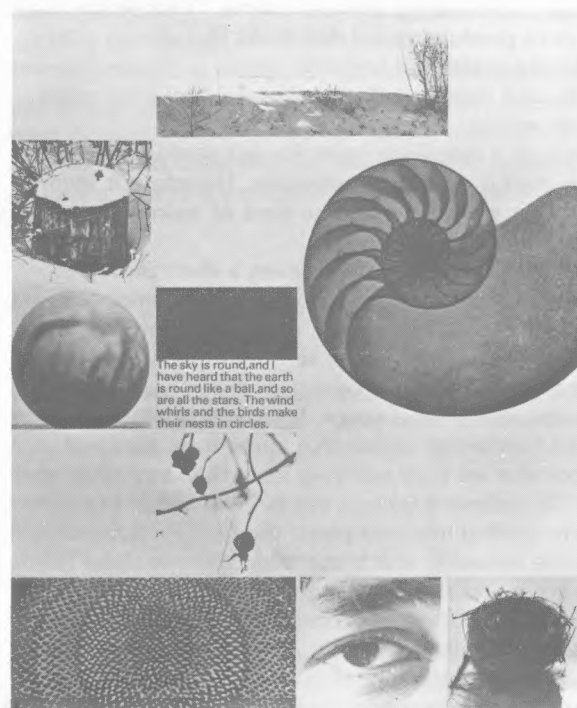
IBM

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9 Photographic/Typographic essays by students in the Visual Communication Design Course in the Department of Art and Design.

The low status of visual discrimination in our education perpetuates the prejudice that verbal proficiency is the most important and quite often the only measure of intelligence. "If you can't make it in the academic subjects, you can still go into art."

It is this attitude which is linked directly with the visual stupidity and confusion created, for instance, by commercial signs on our city streets. This visual pollution, together with other forms of urban decay, force us to go through the day with our eyes half-closed because we see only ugliness where we want to see beauty.

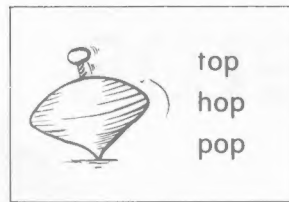
Self-inflicted sensory deprivation is a defence mechanism. We read about 10,000 verbal messages in visual form each day, most of them originated by small businesses. The visual form of these messages is left mostly to the sign painter, the printer, the business owner, his secretary or his wife, all of them untaught in principles of visual communication. If these people had had some visual training as part of their general education, most of the atrocities on our streets would be avoided. We might also be able to understand instructions for appliances, so that we would not end up breaking them before we find out how they work. We would be able to read maps and charts without getting lost or utterly frustrated.

Communications in our society have become so complex that they no longer can be left to amateurs, however well-educated otherwise. National advertising has realized this: although the motivation and the shallowness of the messages are questionable, nevertheless one has to admire the technical, psychological, and visual sophistication. But as soon as the result can no longer be measured in dollars and cents, as in school books, traffic signs, campaigns of public bodies, or other non-commercial uses, the visual quality drops rapidly. This phenomenon tends to make us equate ugliness with meaning, and beauty with stupidity and crass commercial gain.

Day to day communication in our society has very little to do with art. Very few artists are interested in or qualified to create utilitarian products like school books, machines, chairs, kitchen pots, or cars. The aim for these products is efficiency first and beauty second. How many artists do you know who are interested in efficiency?

Let us stop talking about "commercial artists," "lettering artists," "applied arts," "industrial arts." To all these activities art is only incidental. Only a person with less artistic training but a wider knowledge of perceptual principles, psychology, sociology, industrial procedures, and, most of all, a keen sense of social responsibility can visualize the complex system of communication in our society. Let us then call this activity "design," not "art," and let us educate designers as designers and not as artists.

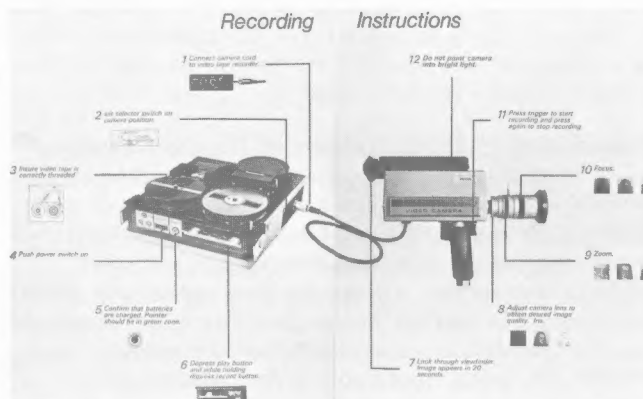
We have got to stop regarding sensory development in our children as only a recreational activity and give it the same priority as reading and writing. The creation of our visual environment is not just a nice esoteric pastime reserved for a few nutty artists, kinky old ladies, and quickly promoted decorating consultants. We have to train our professional designers on a more scientific basis than that required for our visual artists.



10 Most material for our children in school lacks any visual consideration.



11 More, bigger, and louder means better?



12 Clear and logical operating instructions can save time and money, and reduce frustration. This example was designed by a student in the Visual Communication Design Course in the Department of Art and Design.



13 Public campaigns defeat part of their purpose through ugly, inefficient design.

problems in football



By Garry Smith, Assistant Professor of Physical Education

The sport of football has recently been maligned by critics from within the system. Former football players such as Dave Meggyesy, Bernie Parrish, and Gary Shaw have written books denouncing the game, while George Sauer and John McMurty have written articles and have spoken out publicly against abuses in football. These attacks have had a negligible impact on football as a spectator sport; the sellout crowds certainly are no less frequent in both Canadian and American professional football.

Does this mean that the points raised by these detractors are invalid, or does it mean there is substance in their criticisms but that their arguments are being ignored? I would agree with the latter, for football is highly vulnerable to critical attack. The weaknesses of the game are not widely exposed, however, because people are reluctant to analyze activities that give them pleasure.

Harry Edwards, a sociologist from the University of California, believes that professional football has supplanted religion as the "opiate of the masses." There is support for Edwards's contention when one considers that last year the Grey Cup game was held on a Sunday. Church leaders complained that the televised game would conflict with their regular church services. Their pleas to have the game time changed were ignored. Most clergymen, realizing that their attendance would be low if they persisted with regular services, decided either to change the church service time or to cancel it altogether. Perhaps more startling than this incident, was the time in the United States when an NFL play-

off game took place on Christmas Day. Despite going head to head with the most important Christian holiday in the year, football did not suffer.

To demonstrate how football has achieved such a high status in North American culture, it is necessary to examine briefly the historical development of the game. Football evolved from the British sport of rugby and sprang up simultaneously in eastern Canadian universities and in the Ivy League colleges of the United States around 1870. Football started at approximately the same time as the industrial revolution, and the sport's growth paralleled the growth of the ethic of capitalism. The capitalist ethic at this time was based on the notion of Social Darwinism which was popular then, and both ideas became entrenched in North American society. Belief in Social Darwinism was a way of defending the social hierarchy. A person who was wealthy deserved to be better off than a poor person because somehow he must be smarter, better skilled, or more able to adapt to society.

Football was a product of this emergent social milieu, and consequently the game reflected the dominant ideology of its society. The essence of capitalism was the acquisition of territory and the consolidation of wealth. Football was imbued with this ideology by the early participants of the game, who just happened to be the sons of capitalists (business and political leaders) who attended the prestigious universities where football developed.

In its formative stage, football was an extremely brutal game. In the United States the game was nearly eliminated

by presidential edict as President Teddy Roosevelt threatened to ban the game unless the number of injuries and deaths caused by football was reduced substantially. The result of this presidential intervention was to create rule changes which reduced the violence in the game. The introduction of the forward pass was one such rule change.

Football has not changed drastically since then, except that the players are much better skilled now and there is much greater time and effort devoted to coaching the game.

If one were to examine the game of football dispassionately—perhaps as a Martian having just stepped out of his space ship would view the proceedings—what would he see?

1. Basically he would see two groups of people relating to one another in a very violent way.
2. He would notice that the game was played on a highly demarcated field, and that the players used an elliptical ball.
3. He would quickly discern that the object of the game was to conquer territory by moving the ball down the marked field. The ball was moved downfield by a very systematic stop-start process, and the teams were rewarded by being given points whenever they crossed the other team's goal line.

Basically the game is a theatrical production which is symbolic of taking territory and making money and the whole scene is based on extreme conflict.

Part of the reason for football's popularity is that it is a very powerful socializer. The value structure of the game is very similar to that of western society. In football the player has to be competitive and aggressive to succeed; he also learns a healthy respect for authority. These are all attributes which are important in this society.

If one analyzes football more closely, he will notice that the game falls totally within the masculine domain. In fact, one of the chief functions of football is to teach males to become men. Females are only part of the supporting cast; their function is to decorate the sidelines while cheering for their male heroes. One might also be aware of the role that black players have in football. Generally they are, as Eldridge Cleaver has described them, "super masculine menials." Blacks play the heavy work positions but they are often excluded from the thinking positions. This of course is no different from their traditional social role. So it may be true that football is a socializing agent, but one might well question the usefulness of being socialized into this type of society.

There are a number of reasons for placing the sport of football under careful scrutiny. The first reason is a very practical one, and it pertains to the economics of the situation. About \$4,000 is required to field a high school football team and it costs about \$1,200 per year to continue the team. This amounts to about one-third of the average high school athletic budget. This is a considerable amount of money when one considers there are other sports which could be offered which are much cheaper and from which the same benefits can be derived. Lacrosse, soccer and rugger are sports which fit this category.

Besides being a sexist and elitist activity, football is a sport that has a very limited carry-over value. Only a few high school players continue playing the game when they are out of school.

Football is also a very violent game. There is an average of over twenty deaths a year attributed to football, and McMurty has stated that every year there are close to 50,000 major operations on knees alone. Nearly everyone who has played the game has had a serious injury at one time or another. There is a very violent ethic associated with football, which is that in order to be successful you have literally to punish your opponent physically. Unless you can dominate him physically, you won't win.

Dave Meggyesy poignantly describes a situation that occurred in a professional game in which he was playing. His team was playing a weaker team and beating it easily with only a minute or so to go in the game. The opposing team had scored a meaningless touchdown and was about to kick off. Meggyesy was on the kick-off return team and was to block the third man in from the kicker. His man came running full speed downfield, not looking to either side. Meggyesy gathered all his force and hit him low; he could hear his opponent's knee explode in his ear; and they carried the other player off on a stretcher. He was appalled that he had caused this needless injury, yet at the same time he felt satisfied because it was an excellent block and exactly what he was paid to do. This kind of hit always brought strong positive reinforcement from the coaches, but it was also this kind of a hit that helped him to decide to quit the game.

In addition to being a violent game, football in many cases tends to inhibit the emotional maturation of many participants. Football is usually coached in a very dogmatic, authoritarian manner; consequently, players don't learn to make decisions for themselves, and they become followers. Many acts that are carried out within a football team context would not be sanctioned outside of the team setting. Many players have difficulty in establishing a sense of propriety, a difficulty shown commonly by the high incidence of rowdiness amongst football players. For some players the football system becomes a prison which locks them into a state of being a perpetual juvenile.

Some of the excuses and abuses associated with football are not inherent in the game; they are a result of the way the sport is coached and organized. There are some points in favor of football: players learn to co-operate; leadership is developed; and violence is controlled in a socially approved manner. It should be indicated, however, that football is not unique in its ability to develop these attributes.

In the final analysis, football helps socialize people into society in a rather perverse way. Most people are not physically suited to play the game and therefore develop little interest in participating in the game themselves. These people may have a negative view of their bodies and prefer more cerebral pursuits. Football then redirects their energies back into the system by giving them the vicarious thrill of watching a type of theatrical production which symbolizes the pursuit of territory and wealth—which happens to be the dominant ideology of North American culture.

alumni notes

'16 **Hector J. MacLeod**, MSc, founder of the University's Department of Electrical Engineering has been awarded the McNaughton Medal for his pioneering work in engineering education. '25 More than 25 years of work for the mentally retarded were marked recently by the dedication of a plaque at the Eric Cormack Centre in Edmonton. Colonel Cormack was the first president of the Alberta Association for the mentally retarded. '29 **Peter Kilburn**, BA, has been appointed to the board of directors of Imasco Ltd. in Montreal. '30 The 40th anniversary of the Kurimoto Gakuin (educational establishment) initiated by **Yuichi Kurimoto**, BA, LLD'64, will be observed in Nagoya, Japan in 1975. '34 The highest award of Eta Kappa Nu, national electrical engineering honor society, has been given to **Edward C. Jordan**, BSc(Eng), University of Illinois. '35 **Isabel Munroe**, BA, Dean of Women at the University, has resigned to re-enter the field of social work. '38 **Walter E. Harris**, BSc, has been appointed to replace Harry E. Gunning, president of the University, as chairman of the department of chemistry. '39 **John E. Oberholtzer**, BSc, a former deputy minister of industry for Alberta, is working as co-ordinator of CASE, the federal government's Counselling Assistance to Small Enterprises program. '40 **Donald H.E. Carlson**, BA, vice-president and secretary of the Ford Motor Company, has embarked on a new career as editor of the *Financial Times*. '44 *The Times Literary Supplement* recently listed, under Pictures in Books, an entry "Drawings from the Turner Shakespeare" by **Robert R. Wark**, BA. '46 **Richard A. Morton**, BEd, director of Alberta Education Communications Authority, has been elected the first president of the new association for media and technology in Canada. A member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, **W.J. Astle**, BCom, has been made a Fellow of the Chartered Accountants for outstanding contributions to his profession and community. **Donald Cameron**, BSc(Pharm), registrar of the Alberta Pharmaceutical Association, is the second man in history to receive the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association's Meritorious Service Award. '49 A new co-ordinating function, that of deputy minister of the executive council, has been created by Alberta's Premier **Peter Lougheed**, LLB'52. The first appointee is **Harry Hobbs**, BA, former executive secretary to the premier. '50 The chairman of the newly established Alberta Petroleum Marketing Commission, **D. Wayne Minion**, BSc(Eng), feels he is wearing ample legal armor to withstand any jurisdictional challenge to his agency, which began to receive and sell most of Alberta's oil and liquid byproducts output in April. '51 **Ken Krogman**, BSc(Ag), Lethbridge, is president-elect of the Alberta Institute of Agrolgists. '52 Lethbridge scientist **W.C. Torfason**, MSc, has been elected chairman of the Great Plains region of the American Society of Horticultural

Scientists. Stripped to the waist and painted colors of the Blood Indians, Premier **Peter Lougheed**, LLB, smoked the peace pipe with band leaders, who welcomed him as Honorary Chief Crop-Eared Wolf. An \$11 million office tower, Century Place, was topped off recently in Edmonton by **Garth Fryett**, LLB, president of Project Century. '53 Albertans have a generally high quality of medical service readily available, according to **Robert E. Hatfield**, MD, of Calgary, president-elect of the Alberta Medical Association. '54 A former basketball star on campus, **E.W. Lucht**, BSc(Eng), is continuing to direct the planning of business aspects of CIL's polyethylene project in Alberta. A Master of Science in Education degree from Niagara University, New York, has been obtained by **Peter Lloyd Cuff**, BA. '55 **R.J. (Bob) Edgar**, BSc(Pharm), has been elected president of the Edmonton Association for Children with Learning Disabilities. **Craig W. Norstrom**, MD, is clinical assistant, professor of neurosurgery at the University of Texas, and a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. One of Edmonton's two Governor-General's literary award winners, **Rudy Wiebe**, BA, is author of *The Temptations of Big Bear*. '57 Thompson Industries Limited has announced the appointment of **William J. Myers**, BSc(Eng), as vice-president, drilling. '58 **John H. Vandermeuleun**, BSc, has been appointed research physiologist, the Marine Ecology Laboratory, Bedford Institute, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. '59 The British Columbia chapter of the Academy of General Dentistry was recently formed with a number of Alberta graduates filling executive positions. They are **John N. Nasedkin**, DDS, **Roman Hrabar**, DDS'65, and **Judd Anderson**, DDS'65. '60 **D.M. Aboussafy**, BCom, has been appointed treasurer of Inland-Ocean Cement. The mellow, articulate delivery of **Rev. William J. Phillips**, BA, is frequently heard on Hamilton's CHML's "Things Like That." An ordained Baptist minister, "Bud" Phillips is an assistant professor of Christian ministry and communications at McMaster Divinity College. '61 **John L. Fingarson**, BSc, has been elected to the board of Skelly Oil of Canada. '62 **Lawrence Copithorne**, BSc(Ag), has moved from the University of Manitoba to head of balance of payments division, Bank of Canada, Ottawa. '63 A Master of Science in Education from Niagara University, New York, was obtained recently by **Bernard Ludwig Nering**, BSc. '64 A new company in Toronto has been formed by **Graham Farquharson**, BSc(Eng). Strathcona Mineral Service will provide an independent consulting and project management service to the mining industry. **Robert Smith**, BD, minister of Richmond Hill United Church since 1968, has moved to a new pastorate as senior minister of Eglinton United Church, Toronto. '65 Pulp mill effluents were under study this summer at Bishop's University by biology professor **Donald**

Hilton, BSc. '66 **J.K. Fenton**, BSc(Ag), has joined the firm of Sibbald Group, which is engaged in research projects related to agrolgy, agri-business and property appraisal. Alberta-born actor **Stuart Gillard**, BA, played the leading role in a major feature motion picture prepared recently by the National Film Board entitled "Why Rock the Boat?" **Bruce Ferrier**, BA, is a staff development analyst in one of the programming development groups in the advanced systems development division of IBM Canada laboratory, Toronto. '68 **R.D. Shannon**, BA, is corporate solicitor with Agra Industries Limited. **E.S. (Stan) Eichhorn**, BSc(Ag), is now assistant manager of the Agriculture Department, Royal Bank of Canada. '69 **W.G. Stilwell**, BSc, is involved in fostering community participation in planning and will be assistant planner for the Regional District of East Kootenay. **Jean Newman**, BSc(Nu), director of nursing at the Charles Camsell Hospital, has been named recipient of the Robert Wood Johnson award. **L.D. McCann**, PhD(Geography), has joined the department of geography, Mount Allison University. '71 **Denis Aldridge**, BA, has received a scholarship to undertake classical studies in Italy. **Ron Sera**, BSc(Ag), is the new agricultural communications specialist, British Columbia Department of Agriculture, Victoria. '72 **Maurice N. Yusep**, BEd, has been appointed chief executive for the town of High Prairie. **Dan Cole**, BSc(Ag), a CUSO service worker, is recovering in hospital in the northern Thai city of Chiang Mai after receiving a shotgun wound in the chest. Dan is one of about 50 Canadian volunteers working in Thailand with the CUSO organization. **E.M. Barber**, BSc(Ag), has been appointed agricultural engineer with the British Columbia Department of Agriculture, Abbotsford. **E.B. Fogel**, BSc, is pharmaceutical sales representative, representing Smith Kline & French Canada Limited in Edmonton and area. **Mary Driedger**, BSc(Nu), is one of two nurses operating the Blue Creek Medical Centre in British Honduras. '73 The Alberta Opportunity Company has named **John Kennedy**, BCom, as branch manager in Lethbridge.

Deaths

Dorothy I. Hamilton, BA'29, in Victoria. **Margaret J.E. (Dot) Turner**, BA'38, in Victoria. **Russell J. Rowe**, BSc'43, at the Montreal Convalescent Hospital, in June. **George B.T. Clarke**, DDS'48, active in dental health education, in Edmonton. **John Ruptash**, BSc(Eng)'49, retired Dean of Graduate Studies at Carleton University, in Ottawa. **Brian Hocking**, MSc'49, in Edmonton. **Kenneth M. Knight**, BSc(Eng)'49, in Calgary. **Walter Warren**, BEd'66, in Grande Prairie.